**Low Power T.V. Transmitter in Shimla**

†91. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a very lower power T.V. transmitter has been set-up at Chirgaon in Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh during the year 2002-03;

(b) if so, whether the area expected to be covered from the transmitter tower at Chirgaon is not being covered because the tower is behind a hill;

(c) whether local people have requested again and again for changing its location; and

(d) if so, by when Government would get it installed at a right place so that maximum number of people could see the T.V. programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Installation of VLPT at Chirgaon was completed during 2002-03 and the transmitter has been commissioned w.e.f. 1.5.2003.

(b) VLPT at Chirgaon is reported to be functioning normally and provides coverage within a range of about 8 Kms. However, certain pockets, though in the coverage zone of the transmitter, are not covered due to hilly terrain conditions.

(c) Prasar Bharati has informed that no request for change of location of the above VLPT has been received.

(d) Does not arise.

**Implementation of CAS**

92. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many State Governments have demanded that Centre should pay for losses due to implementation of CAS;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the steps taken to implement CAS for advantage of the viewers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Government has not received communication from any State Governments demanding that Central Government pay for the losses due to implementation of CAS.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) After monitoring the status of preparedness for introducing CAS and after extensive discussions with various stakeholders, namely Broadcasters, MSOs, Cable Operators, Consumer Groups, it has been decided to roll out CAS in a zonal phased manner in the metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata and in Chennai Metropolitan area, w.e.f. 1.9.2003. Notification was issued on 10th July, 2003 and is available in the Ministry's website, www.mib.nic.in. The intervening period will be utilized to step up preparedness for smooth roll out of CAS and for educating the subscribers. Government has specified Rs. 72/- (plus taxes) as the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music. Free-to-air channels over and above this number, would also be made available to subscribers within the maximum amount mentioned above.

The Cable Television (Amendment) Rules, 2003 has been notified on 6.6.2003 specify the manner of publicizing the subscription rates of pay channels, submission of quarterly report by cable operators, declaration of channels as "free-to-air" and "pay", etc. These Rules, *inter alia*, provide that:-

(i) subscriber shall not be forced to buy more than the channel (s) of his choice through the mechanism of discounted pricing and by grouping of channels;

(ii) the cable operator shall make provisions for rent and security deposit or refund thereof as well as warranty, repair and maintenance in the manner notified by the Government.

Further Multi System Operators & Cable Operators have come out with consumer friendly schemes through which the Set Top Boxes (STBs) will be made available to consumers.

The Bureau of Indian Standards has laid down standards for the STB in August, 2002. Steps have been taken to ensure the quality of the STBs and sample testing. Government has rationalised the duty on import of STBs and its components, in order to make it affordable.

**Status of Cable TV Networks**

93. SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the cable television networks, DTH operations and Conditional Access System;

(b) whether Government have been able to arrive at an agreement with the people concerned on the areas mentioned above; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Cable Television Network and Conditional Access System (CAS) are governed by the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, amended from time to time. DTH operations are governed by the DTH Guidelines. These are available on this Ministry's website http://www.mib.nic.in. After monitoring the preparedness of the stakeholders to introduce addressability and after extensive discussions with the various stakeholders namely Broadcasters, Multi System Operators, Cable Operator, Consumer Groups etc., it has been decided to roll out CAS in a zonal-phased manner in the metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata and at one go in the entire Chennai Metropolitan Area w.e.f. 01.9.2003. Notification has been issued on 10th July, 2003, which is available on this Ministry's Website. The intervening period will be utilized to step up preparedness for smooth roll out of CAS and for educating the subscribers.

Four applications for providing DTH Service have been received and are under process.